

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 2 as follows:

Figure 1 shows Figures 1A-1F show the disruption of the *bcl-w* gene. (A) The targeting vector *pbcl-wlox neo' tk*. Shaded bars represent regions derived from the *bcl-w* gene; *tk*, a thymidine kinase expression cassette; *neo'*, a PGK- *neo'* expression cassette; and diamonds, *loxP* sequences. (B) The wt *bcl-w* locus. Boxes represent exons (solid, coding region; open, untranslated region). E, *Eco* RI sites; sizes of *Eco* RI fragments are in kb. The *bcl-w* genomic DNA probes used for Southern blot analyses are labeled *a* and *b*, while the *bcl-w* cDNA sequences used as riboprobes are indicated by *c* and *d*. (C) Homologous recombination replaces the first 413 bp of the *bcl-w* coding region with a PGK- *neo'* expression cassette bounded by *loxP* sites. (D) Cre-mediated recombination deletes the PGK- *neo'* sequence, leaving only 127 bp of exogenous sequence, including a single *loxP* site. (E) Southern blot of genomic DNA from wt (+/+), heterozygous (+/-) and homozygous mutant (-/-) *bcl-w* mice (line 228), hybridized with *bcl-w* cDNA probe *a*. (F) Southern blot of genomic DNA from heterozygous mice (line 228) before (+/-) and after (+/ Δ) the action of Cre recombinase, hybridized with *bcl-w* probe *b*.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 17 as follows:

Figure 2 is a Figures 2A-2C are photographic representations showing expression of the *bcl-w* gene. (A) Northern blot of total RNA (10 μ g) extracted from the testes of 4-wk old wt (+/+) and *bcl-w* ^{Δ/Δ} mice (Δ/Δ), hybridized to a probe containing the first 1.2 kb of the *bcl-w* cDNA (upper panel); glyceraldehydes phosphate dehydrogenase mRNA served as a control (*gapdh*, lower panel). (B) Western blot analysis of protein lysates from the brain, testis and pancreas of wt and *bcl-w* ^{Δ/Δ} mice, using polyclonal anti-Bcl-w antibody. The 21-kDa Bcl-w protein is indicated. (C)

Western blots of protein lysates from testis cell lines, with the same antibody. GC-1 is a germ cell line derived from type B spermatogonia, TM4 a Sertoli cell line and TM3 a Leydig cell line; all were obtained from the American Type Culture Collection.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 1 as follows:

Figure 4 is a Figures 4A-4B are graphical representations showing degeneration of testis in *bcl-w^{Δ/Δ}* mice. (A) Mean mass of testes (3 mice per group). (B) TUNEL-labelled nuclei per tubule, counted at 2, 4, 8 and 14 wk (3 mice per group). Error bars denote 2 SEM.